The BLIND MAN'S EYES

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formed fully to his apprehension that this halt was more important and likely to last much longer than those that had gone before.

CHAPTER IV

Are You Hillward?

The bell in the washroom at the end of the car was ringing violently, and someone was reinforcing his ring with a stentorian call for "Porter! Porter!"

Eaton realized that it was very cold in his berth—also that the train, which was standing still, had been in that motionless condition for some time. He threw up the window curtain as he appreciated that, and, looking out, found that he faced a great unbroken bank of glistening white snow as high as the top of the car at this point and rising even higher ahead. He listened, therefore, while the Englishman—for the voice calling to the porter was his—extracted all available information from the negro.

"Porter, where are we?"

"Between Fracroft and Simons, suh."

"Yet?"

"Yessuh, yit!"

"That foolish snow still?"

"Yessuh; and snow some more, suh?"

"But haven't we the plow still ahead?"

"Oh, yessuh; the plow's ahaid. We still got it; but that's all, suh. It ain't doin' much; it's busted."

"Eh—what?"

"Yessuh—busted! There was right smart of a slide across the track, and the crew, I understands, diagnosed it jus' fo' a snow bank and done bucked right into it. But they was stuck in this, suh; we's layin right below a hill; and that rock jus' busted that rotary like a Belgium shell hit it. Yessuh—pieces of that rotary essentially scattered themselves in four directions besides backwards and fo'wards. We ain't done much travelin' since then."

Eaton no longer paid attention.

"Snowed in and stopped since four!" The realization startled him with the necessity of taking it into account in his plans. He jerked himself up in his berth and began pulling

Eaton started at the first call of the porter; he sat up and faced about.

The conductor was opposite Section Three; Eaton now waited tensely and delayed until the conductor was past; then putting his head out of his curtains he hailed as the conductor was passing through the door.

"What name? Who is that telegram for?"

"Mr. Lawrence Hillward."

"Oh, thank you; then that's mine."

Connery held back. "I thought your name was Eaton."

"It is. Mr. Hillward—Lawrence Hillward—is an associate of mine who expected to make this trip with me but could not. So I should have telegrams or other communications addressed to him. Is there anything to show?"

"No, sir—train dellvery."

Eaton drew his curtains close again and ripped the envelope open; but before reading the message he observed with alarm that his pajama jacket had opened across the chest, and a small round scar, such as that left by a high-powered bullet penetrating, was exposed. He gasped almost audibly, realizing this, and clapped his hand to his chest and buttoned his jacket. The message—nine words without signature—lay before him:

"Thicket knot youngster omniscient tissue foliage lecture tragic instigation."

It was some code which Eaton recognized but could not decipher at once. The conductor was still standing in the aisle.

"When did you get this?" Eaton asked, looking out.

"Just now. That message came through yesterday some time and was waiting for you at Simons; when we got them this morning they sent it on."

"I see; thanks." Eaton, assured that if the conductor had seen anything he suspected no significance in what he saw, closed his curtains and buttoned them carefully. The conductor moved on. Eaton took a small English-Chinese pocket dictionary from his vest pocket and opened it under cover of the blanket; counting five words up from "thicket" he found "they"; five down from "knot" gave him "know"; six up from "youngster" was "you"; six down from "omniscient" was "one;" seven up from "issue" was "is," and so continuing, he translated the words to:

"They know you. One is following. Leave train instantly."

Eaton, nervous and jerky, as he completed the first six words, laughed as he compiled the final three. "Leave train instantly!" The humor of that advice in his present situation, as he looked out the window at the solid bank of snow, appealed to him. A waiter from the dining car came back, announcing the first call for breakfast, and spurred him into action. Passengers from the Pullman at the rear passed Eaton's section for the diner. He heard Harriet Dorne's voice in some quiet conventional remark to the man who followed her. Eaton started at it; then he dressed swiftly and hurried into the now deserted washroom and then on to breakfast.

Harriet Dorne was sitting facing the door at the second of the larger tables; opposite her, and with his back to Eaton, sat Donald Avery. A third place was laid beside the girl, as though they expected Dorne to join them; but they had begun their fruit without waiting. The girl glanced up as Eaton halted in the doorway; her blue eyes brightened with a look part friendliness, part purpose. "Oh, Mr. Eaton," she smiled, "wouldn't you like to sit with us? I

"Mr. Eaton," She Smiled, "Wouldn't You Like to Sit With Us?"

don't think Father is coming to breakfast now; and if he does, of course there's still room."

She pulled back the chair beside her enticingly; and Eaton accepted it.

"Good morning, Mr. Avery," he said to Miss Dorne's companion formally as he sat down, and the man across the table murmured something perforce.

As Eaton ordered his breakfast, he appreciated for the first time that his coming had interrupted a conversation—or rather a sort of monologue of complaint on the part of Standish addressed impersonally to Avery.

They engaged in conversation as they breakfasted—a conversation in which Avery took almost no part, though Miss Dorne tried openly to draw him in; then the sudden entrance of Connery, followed closely by a stout, brusque man who belonged to the rear Pullman, took Eaton's attention and hers.

"Which is him?" the man with Connery demanded loudly.

Connery checked him, but pointed at the same time to Eaton.

"That's him, is it?" the other man said. "Then go ahead."

Eaton observed that Avery, who had turned in his seat, was watching this diversion on the part of the conductor with interest. Connery stopped beside Eaton's seat.

"You took a telegram for Lawrence Hillward this morning," he asserted.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because it was mine, or meant for me, as I said at the time. My name is Eaton; but Mr. Hillward expected to make this trip with me."

The stout man with the conductor forced himself forward.

"That's pretty good, but not quite good enough!" he charged. "Conductor, get that telegram for me!"

Eaton got up, controlling himself under the insult of the other's manner.

"What business is it of yours?" he demanded.

"What business? Why, only that I'm Lawrence Hillward—that's all, my friend! What are you up to, anyway? Lawrence Hillward traveling with you! I never set eyes on you until I saw you on this train; and you take my telegram!" The charge was made loudly and distinctly; every one in the dining car—Eaton could not see every one, but he knew it was so—had put down fork or cup or spoon and was staring at him. "What did you do it for? What did you want with it?" the stout man blared on. "Did you think I wasn't on the train? What?"

Eaton felt he was paling as he faced the blustering smaller man. He realized that the passengers he could see—those at the smaller tables—already had judged his explanation and found him wanting; the, others unquestionably had done the same. Avery was gazing up at him with a sort of contented triumph.

"The telegram was for me, Conductor!" he repeated.

"Get that telegram, Conductor!" the stout man demanded again.

"I suppose," Connery suggested, "you have letters or a card or something, Mr. Eaton, to show your relationship to Lawrence Hillward."

"No, I have not."

Connery gazed from one claimant to the other. "Will you give this gentleman the telegram?" he asked Eaton.

"I will not."

"Then I shall furnish him another copy; it was received here on the train by our express clerk as the operator. I'll go forward and get him another copy."

"That's for you to decide," Eaton said; and as though the matter was closed for him, he resumed his seat. He was aware that, throughout the car the passengers were watching him curiously.

"Are you ready to go back to our car now, Harriet?" Avery inquired when she had finished her breakfast, though Eaton was not yet through.

"Surely there's no hurry about anything today," the girl returned. They waited until Eaton had finished.

"Shall we all go back to the observation car and see if there's a walk down the track or whether it's snowed over?" she said impartially to the two. They went through the Pullmans together.

The first Pullman contained four or five passengers; the next, in which Eaton had his berth, was still empty as they passed through. The next Pullman also, at first glance, seemed to have been deserted in favor of the diner forward or of the club-car farther back. The porter had made up all the berths there also, except one; but someone was still sleeping behind the curtains of Section Three, for a man's hand hung over the aisle. It was a gentleman's hand, with long, well-formed fingers, sensitive and at the same time strong. That was the berth of Harriet Dorne's father; Eaton was the last of the three to pass, and so the others did not notice his start; but so strong was the fascination of the hand in the aisle that he turned back and gazed at it before going on into the last car. Some eight or ten passengers—men and women—were lounging in the easy-chairs of the observation room; a couple, ulstered and fur-capped, were standing on the platform gazing back from the train.

The canyon through the snowdrifts, bored by the giant rotary plow the night before, was almost filled; drifts of snow eight or ten feet high and, in places, pointing still higher, came up to the rear of the train; the end of the platform itself was buried under three feet of snow; the men standing on the platform could barely look over the higher drifts.

"There's no way from the train in that direction now," Harriet Dorne lamented as she saw this. "What shall we do with ourselves?"

"Cribbage, Harriet? You and I?" Avery invited.

She shook her head. "If we have to play cards, get a fourth and make it auction; but must it be cards? Isn't there some way we can get out for a walk?"

"There's the top of the cars, Miss Dorne," Eaton suggested. "If we could get up these, we'd get a fairly decent walk and see everything."

"Good!" the girl applauded. "How do we get up?"

"I'll see the conductor about it," Eaton offered; and before Avery could discuss it, he started back through the train.

TO BE CONTINUED

The Tragedy of Lodge

With a plurality over Colonel Gaston of only 8,425, Mr. Lodge will be a minority senator in that sense that he is the choice of a minority of the voters of Massachussetts. Mr. Nicholl't vote added to Colonel Gaston's makes a total anti-Lodge vote so far in excess of the vote the senator received that he can no longer profess to represent a majority of the electorate The majority of his own constituents have rejected him after he had made a personal appeal to them for another term. He gets the term, but it must seem to him more like a term in the house of correction than in the house of correction than in the United States Senate.

As the leader of the Republican party in this State Mr. Lodge can hardly survive the prestige he has received.

Mr. Lodge led his party to a virtual disaster by pressing his own claims upon it. After such a blunder, his position is more uncomfortable, even more humiliating, than it would have been had he been actually defeated. He retains his office, but the substance of power has left him. He has lost tremendously in influence in Washington both in the Senate and at the White House- At Home the politicians will no longer yield unquestioning obedience to him. They will all begin promptly searching the horizon for the new party leader.

Neither friend nor enemy could have wished Mr. Lodge to face a troubled future with his hands withered and his voice enfeebled by the Bay State's vote of "no confidence,"